

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for grading, encapsulating and commoditizing objects thereby making the objects trade ready, the method comprising the steps:
  - 5        a) grading an object based upon a predetermined grading scale and generating a grade indicator for the object;
  - b) associating the grade indicator with the object in a substantially permanent manner by encapsulating the object and a visual representation of the grade indicator in a tamper-evident holder; and
  - 10      c) commoditizing the object by generating relevant textual trade data for the object and storing the relevant textual trade data in a database in a form for use in generating a trade listing for the object.
2. The method according to claim 1 including performing said steps a) through  
15 c) for a plurality of objects and providing access to the relevant textual trade data in the database to sellers to generate trade listings for the objects.
3. The method according to claim 2 including providing access to the trade listings to the sellers and to buyers within an online peer-to-peer trading environment.  
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4. The method according to claim 2 including assigning a unique identifying indicia to each of the objects and associating the assigned unique identifying indicia with the corresponding one of the objects encapsulated in the holder in a substantially permanent manner.  
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5. The method according to claim 4 wherein for each of the objects said step c) further includes printing the assigned associated unique identifying indicia onto a label and securing the printed label within the tamper-evident holder thereby providing a substantially permanent identifying indicia for the object.  
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6. The method according to claim 4 including a step of connecting the database to a host computer, connecting a remote terminal to the host computer, sending a selected one of the unique identifying indicia from the remote terminal to the host computer and retrieving from the database at the remote terminal the relevant textual trade data for the  
5 one of the objects associated with the selected one of the unique identifying indicia.

7. The method according to claim 4 including a step of generating at least one image of each of the objects, digitizing the images for viewing, storing the digitized images in the database and assigning to each of the images stored in the database a  
10 corresponding one of the associated unique identifying indicia.

8. The method according to claim 7 including a step of connecting the database to a host computer, connecting a remote terminal to the host computer, sending a selected one of the unique identifying indicia from the remote terminal to the host computer and  
15 retrieving from the database at the remote terminal each stored image for the one of the objects associated with the selected one of the unique identifying indicia.

9. The method according to claim 4 wherein each of the unique identifying indicia is an assigned unique certificate number, the unique certificate numbers having a  
20 predetermined format for retrieving the stored relevant textual trade data associated with the objects.

10. The method according to claim 4 wherein the unique identifying indicia is an assigned unique URL, the unique URL's having a predetermined format for retrieving  
25 the stored relevant textual trade data associated with the objects.

11. The method according to claim 4 wherein the unique identifying indicia is an assigned unique machine readable bar code, the unique bar codes having a predetermined format for retrieving the stored relevant textual trade data associated with the objects.

12. The method according to claim 2 including a step of providing a marketing indicia for each of the objects, the marketing indicia being physically associated with the tamper-evident holders encapsulating the objects, the marketing indicia being visibly conspicuous thereby indicating that the objects are trade ready within an online peer-to-peer trading environment.

13. The method according to claim 2 wherein the objects are at least one of coins, stamps, trading cards, currency and documents.

10        14. The method according to claim 2 including generating trade listings from the stored relevant textual trade data in at least one trade enabling marketplace computer and providing access to the trade listings to the sellers and to buyers of the objects through computers connected to the marketplace computer.

15        15. The method according to claim 2 wherein the objects are coins and the stored relevant textual trade data is at least one of a plurality of item specific attributes associated with the coins, the item specific attributes including a certificate number, a year of mintage indicator, a Mint branch indicator, a denomination indicator, a coin type designation, a coin grade indicator, and a coin grading firm identifier.

20              16. The method according to claim 2 wherein the objects are coins and including assigning a unique identifying indicia to each of the coins, associating the assigned unique identifying indicia with the corresponding one of the coins encapsulated in the holder in a substantially permanent manner, and retrieving the stored relevant textual trade data from the database utilizing the assigned unique identifying indicia associated with each of the coins.

17. A method for facilitating the exchange of trade ready graded encapsulated objects utilizing a network of interconnected computers, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) providing a marketplace computer and receiving at the marketplace computer  
5 data over a network from a relevant trade data host computer, the received data pertaining to graded encapsulated objects offered for sale and including relevant trade data associated with each of the objects, each of the objects having a substantially permanent uniquely assigned identifying indicia for effectuating the transmission of the relevant trade data  
10 associated with the objects;
- b) responding to the data received from the host computer by storing the included relevant trade data in the marketplace computer;
- c) generating in the marketplace computer a unique presentation format relating to the objects offered for sale; and
- 15 d) providing access to the marketplace computer to a plurality of buyer computers across the network for displaying at the buyer computers the unique presentation format including the relevant trade data of a selected one of the objects.

20 18. The method according to claim 17 including performing said step d) in response to a request from a one of the buyer computers wherein the marketplace computer transmits data including the unique presentation format across the network to the requesting one of the buyer computers.

25 19. The method according to claim 18 wherein the transmitted data includes at least a minimum of relevant textual trade data necessary for generating the unique presentation format relating to the selected object, the generated unique presentation format being an online peer-to-peer trade listing.

20. The method according to claim 19 wherein the objects offered for sale are trade ready graded encapsulated commoditized coins and the minimum relevant textual trade data includes a plurality of item specific attributes associated with the coins, the item specific attributes comprising a certificate number, a year of mintage indicator, a  
5 Mint branch indicator, a denomination indicator, a coin type designation, a coin grade indicator, and a coin grading firm identifier.

21. The method according to claim 17 including performing said step d) wherein the marketplace computer responds to a search request from one of the buyer computers  
10 by searching the stored data, the search request including at least one of a plurality of item specific attributes associated with the coins and included in the relevant trade data, the plurality of item specific attributes comprising a certificate number, a year of mintage indicator, a Mint branch indicator, a denomination indicator, a coin type designation, a coin grade indicator, and a coin grading firm identifier; and wherein the marketplace  
15 computer transmits a result of the search request to the one buyer computer.

22. The method according to claim 17 wherein said step a) is performed by providing the marketplace computer at an online peer-to-peer trading facility and transmitting the data from the host computer to the online peer-to-peer trading facility  
20 marketplace computer via XML data exchange.

23. The method according to claim 17 wherein said step a) includes providing the host computer at a third party grading firm acting as a marketplace intermediary and operating the host computer to provide the relevant trade data to the marketplace  
25 computer on behalf of a plurality of seller computers, the seller computers having network access to the marketplace computer.

24. The method according to claim 17 wherein said step a) includes operating the host computer as a proxy seller computer with network access to a plurality of seller  
30 computers, the seller computers creating online peer-to-peer trade listings at the marketplace in a predetermined manner.

25. A method of facilitating the exchange of graded encapsulated coins over a network among a plurality of interconnected computers, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving at a marketplace computer data over a network from seller computers, the data pertaining to graded encapsulated coins offered for sale, the coins each being secured within a tamper-evident holder and having a substantially permanent uniquely assigned identifying indicia physically associated therewith, the data including relevant trade data uniquely associated with each of the coins offered for sale and including at least one of a date indicating a year of mintage, a mintmark indicator, a coin type designation, a denomination, a grade indicator and a grading firm identity;
- b) storing the data received from the seller computers in a data storage means;
- c) generating a presentation format in the marketplace computer; and
- d) providing access to the marketplace computer over the network to a plurality of buyer computers, obtaining the stored data from the data storage means and presenting the relevant trade data to the buyer computers in the presentation format.

20 26. The method according to claim 25 including a step of receiving a search request from one of the buyer computers, performing a search in the data storage means in response to the search request and generating a result of the search from the marketplace computer to the one buyer computer.

25 27. The method according to claim 26 wherein the search request includes at least one trade relevant item specific attribute from the attributes comprising a date indicating a year of mintage, a mintmark indicator, a coin type designation, a denomination, a grade indicator and a grading firm identity.

30 28. The method according to claim 26 wherein the search request includes a selected one of the uniquely assigned identifying indicia.

29. The method according to claim 25 wherein each of the unique identifying indicia is a certificate number unique to the associated one of the coins.

30. The method according to claim 25 wherein said step c) includes the presentation of at least one image of at least one of the coins offered for sale.

31. The method according to claim 25 wherein said step c) includes the presentation of a grade specific fair market value associated with at least one of the coins offered for sale.

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32. The method according to claim 25 wherein said step c) includes the presentation of historical price realized data associated with at least one of the coins offered for sale.

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33. A method for providing a database of price realized information associated with the exchange of graded encapsulated objects, the method comprising the steps of:

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a) selecting a graded encapsulated object based upon a predetermined selection criteria, the graded object being encapsulated in a tamper-evident holder with an associated grade indicator and having an assigned unique identifying indicia, said assigned unique identifying indicia being associated with the graded object in a substantially permanent manner;

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b) storing data including price realized information in a database for the selected graded encapsulated object and associating the stored data in the database with the unique identifying indicia assigned to the selected graded encapsulated object;

c) repeating said steps a) and b) for a plurality of graded encapsulated objects; and

d) providing access to the stored data in the database by selecting one of the assigned associated unique identifying indicia.

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34. The method according to claim 33 wherein the unique identifying indicia is an assigned certificate number, the certificate number having a predetermined format for retrieving the data from the database.

5       35. The method according to claim 33 wherein the unique identifying indicia is an assigned unique URL, the URL having a predetermined format for retrieving the data from the database.

10      36. The method according to claim 33 wherein the unique identifying indicia is an assigned machine readable bar code, the bar code having a predetermined format for retrieving the data from the database.

15      37. The method according to claim 33 including a step of connecting the database to a host computer, connecting a remote terminal to the host computer, sending a selected one of the unique identifying indicia from the remote terminal to the host computer, generating from the host computer to the remote terminal the stored data corresponding to the selected unique identifying indicia and reviewing the price realized information at the remote terminal.

20      38. The method according to claim 33 wherein the objects are one or more of coins, stamps, trading cards, and documents.

25      39. The method according to claim 33 wherein said step b) is performed by storing price realized information gathered from a plurality of completed online peer-to-peer transactions involving selected ones of the objects.

30      40. The method according to claim 39 wherein the completed online peer-to-peer transactions are completed online peer-to-peer auction transactions and said step b) is performed by storing price realized information gathered from a plurality of completed online auction transactions involving selected graded encapsulated objects, said step b) further including storing at least one of an auction listing identifier, closing date of the auction listing, an associated grade indicator and a grading firm identifier.

41. The method according to claim 39 wherein said completed online peer-to-peer transactions are completed online peer-to-peer fixed price transactions and said step b) is performed by storing price realized information gathered from a plurality of completed 5 online fixed price transactions involving selected graded encapsulated objects, said step b) further including storing at least one of a fixed price trade listing identifier, closing date of the fixed price trade listing, associated grade indicator and grading firm identifier.

42. A method for providing a database of information associated with 10 encapsulated graded objects, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) gathering selected data from a pool of data representing completed online peer-to-peer transactions related to the sale of graded encapsulated objects;
- b) storing the gathered selected data in a database, said gathered selected data 15 including price realized information and at least one of an encapsulation indicator, an assigned grade indicator and a grading firm indicator;
- c) correcting a bias in said gathered selected data wherein said bias was induced by amalgamating online peer-to-peer transaction data into a data pool without regard for encapsulation, grade and grading firm; and
- d) repeating said steps a) through c) for a plurality of online peer-to-peer transactions relating to the sale of graded encapsulated objects and storing the bias corrected gathered selected data in a database and connecting the database to a host computer.

25 43. The method according to claim 42 wherein said step a) includes searching a plurality of online peer-to-peer trading facilities for relevant trade data associated with encapsulated graded objects.

44. The method according to claim 43 wherein said step a) is performed by 30 searching manually.

45. The method according to claim 43 wherein said step a) is performed using a persistent operative scanning agent.

46. The method according to claim 43 wherein said step a) is performed by  
5 obtaining an online peer-to-peer transaction data pool from a peer-to-peer transaction  
data provider.

47. The method according to claim 42 wherein the online peer-to-peer  
transactions relating to graded encapsulated objects involve graded encapsulated objects  
10 each having substantially permanent assigned unique identifying indicia and said step a)  
is effectuated by using the assigned unique identifying indicia corresponding to  
encapsulated graded objects.

48. The method according to claim 42 wherein said step c) includes an  
15 application of a statistical model to price realized data associated with the sale of relevant  
graded encapsulated objects, the statistical model being used to calculate a mean price  
realized.

49. The method according to claim 48 wherein the application of a statistical  
20 model to the gathered selected data includes calculating a ninety-five percent confidence  
interval associated with a normal distribution of price realized data and wherein the price  
realized data lying outside of two standard deviations is considered statistically  
insignificant.

25 50. The method according to claim 48 wherein the application of a statistical  
model to the gathered selected data includes calculating a ninety-five percent confidence  
interval associated with a normal distribution of price realized data and wherein price  
realized data lying within the calculated ninety-five percent confidence interval is  
considered to be statistically significant.

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51. The method according to claim 42 wherein the graded encapsulated objects  
are one or more of coins, stamps, trading cards, currency and documents.

52. An integrated market exchange system facilitating trade in graded encapsulated commoditized coins, the system comprising:

- 5        a marketplace computer operatively controlled by an online peer-to-peer trade enabling facility, said marketplace computer storing data associated with offers to sell and offers to buy graded encapsulated commoditized coins, the graded encapsulated commoditized coins being selected from a plurality of graded encapsulated coins provided by at least one third party grading firm;
- 10      a host computer operatively controlled by a market maker engaged in the trade of graded encapsulated commoditized coins, said host computer storing relevant trade data associated with the graded encapsulated commoditized coins; and
- 15      a communication means connecting said marketplace computer with said host computer and connecting coin sellers and coin buyers with said marketplace computer whereby the coin sellers and the coin buyers are provided access to said relevant trade data stored in said host computer.

53. The system according to claim 52 wherein the graded encapsulated  
20 commoditized coins are tamper-evident trade ready graded encapsulated commoditized coins each having an assigned and substantially permanent unique identifying indicia.

54. The system according to claim 52 wherein the graded encapsulated commoditized coins are tamper-evident trade ready graded encapsulated commoditized  
25 coins and including a data storage means operatively connected to said host computer storing said relevant trade data.

55. The system according to claim 52 wherein said marketplace computer provides access to said host computer to a marketplace computer transaction environment in a predetermined streamlined manner, said predetermined streamlined manner being effectuated by said host computer communicating said relevant trade data 5 to said marketplace computer in a form compatible with the marketplace computer transaction environment.

56. The system according to claim 55 wherein said form compatible with the marketplace computer transaction environment includes permitting said host computer to 10 effectuate actions within the marketplace transaction environment including initiation of an auction style trade listing and initiation of a fixed price trade listing.

57. The system according to claim 55 wherein the form compatible with the marketplace computer transaction environment includes XML data exchange.

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58. The system according to claim 52 wherein said marketplace computer responds to an offer to buy from one of the coin buyers that matches on offer to sell from one of the coin sellers by generating transaction data enabling the one coin buyer to acquire an associated one of the trade ready graded encapsulated commoditized coins 20 from the one coin seller.